

**Testimony of EDITH R. MAIN**  
**[SPANISH TEACHER, BENNIE DOVER JACKSON MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEW LONDON, CT]**  
*in support of Raised Bill N<sup>o</sup>. 186*  
**LCO N<sup>o</sup>. 895**

**AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL COUNSELORS.**

Education Committee- February 26, 2018

Senator Slossberg, Senator Boucher, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee, my name is Edith Main, and I am a Spanish teacher in Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, New London, CT. Thank you for the opportunity to offer **testimony in support of Senate Bill 186- An Act Concerning School Counselors.**

Today's school counselors are asked to provide many services to their school and community beyond the traditional scheduling and college and career focus that they grew up with in previous generations. Today's students need pro-active counselors who are prepared and available to address issues confronting the youth of today.

For example, my granddaughter attended an elementary school in a Priority School District where she became involved in some major disagreements with classmates. During 5<sup>th</sup> grade, she benefitted from weekly sessions with a School Counselor who addressed ways to recognize and confront misbehavior in her classroom. I asked her about the weekly lunch meeting. "Grandma," she said, "it's anger management. It's helping me keep focused when other kids are bad in class." The group certainly supported my granddaughter and her classmates in many ways. As a result, she became a role model in her classroom and is enjoying success in her middle school.

As a middle school teacher, I rely on the School Counselors to help students with life issues that spill over into their school performance. I ask them to find time in their busy schedules to meet with students who need far more than "Guidance" as they struggle to participate in their academics. Many students rely on their School Counselor as a caring adult, someone who can intervene on their behalf, and someone who can help them deal with overwhelming problems. How I wish that comprehensive programs could have helped these students before the realities of their lives started to take over their ability to function in school.

I would ask that you amend the underlying bill to include the Connecticut School Counselor Association proposal to have the State Board of Education adopt guidelines and recommendations for a comprehensive school counseling program. I believe adequate staffing by trained School Counselors could support the educational community significantly.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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